



Brownstone Technology

Solutions

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What Should You Consider When Selecting Point-of-Sale Software?

Identifying the best point-of-sale (POS) software for your restaurant can be very confusing and frustrating. Individuals who are responsible for purchasing POS software need to take into account two key factors before they begin their software search.

First, there are many different types of establishments within the hospitality/restaurant industry including quick service, family dining, fine dining, delivery-dependant locations, full service bars, bars and nightclubs. Each type of establishment has unique needs in regards to POS software. However, a buyer must recognize that their business model may change over time and thereby alter the requirements of a POS system. For example, a pizza place based solely on delivery may decide to expand and offer table service. This would completely change the needed functions of a POS system.

Second, buyers must remember that certain POS software specializes in different types of establishments while other software provides a full spectrum of functions. There are pros and cons to both types of software. Specialty software may be cheaper initially and provide stronger functionality in certain areas. However, even a minor change to the business model may require a complete change in software. On the other hand, more complex systems can handle almost any situation but they may be more expensive, harder to use and more difficult to maintain.

With these two issues in mind it is important that buyers first identify which functions they will need their software to perform. The primary functions of POS software to be considered are:

Customer Reports - The ability of the software to allow the user to design customized reports and queries. Does the software allow for customized reports or only pre-formatted and designed reports?

Database Type - Which database type is the software using? Is it using a database with easy import and export functions or is it written on a proprietary database that will require technical support every time an import or export of data is needed?

Delivery - The ability of the software to process delivery orders. Basic functions should include tracking orders by customer, last order recall for the last five order minimum, caller ID and the ability to set deliveries for pre-set times.

Dispatch - The ability of the software to assign delivery orders to drivers, check the driver out, time the deliveries and check the driver back in and cash them out. Additional functions may include the mapping of the most efficient delivery route for the driver.

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Upcoming Trade Shows:

International Pizza Expo:
March 2-4 2010
Las Vegas Convention Center

Las Vegas Bar and Nightclub Show:
March 8-10 2010
Las Vegas Convention Center

What Should You Consider When Selecting Point-of-Sale Software? (Continued)

Dynamic GUI Interface - The ability to design and build the front-of-house interface in a customized way including the color coding of buttons, sizing/shape of buttons, and location of all major portions of the screen. Does the program allow for the end-user (the manger) to make the majority of these changes without technical support?

Front of House Operational Functions: The front of the house operating screens need to be able to handle the following functions based on the establishment's needs:

- Split & Merge Checks
- Split & Merge Items
- Voids
- Comps
- Discounts
- Last order reorder
- Hold order
- Fire order
- Track discount, void and comp reasons



House Accounts - The ability of the software to track, accept and maintain house accounts including enforcing credit limits and printing statements.

Human Resources - The ability of the software to maintain all basic HR information so that duplicate entry is not occurring with another accounting program. The ability to integrate with the accounting and/or payroll software should also be considered. Can the HR module track job requirements and ensure employees meet these requirements prior to working in a specific job?

Inventory - The ability to maintain inventory of items, track vendors and generate purchase orders.

Inventory/Liquor Inventory (Detailed) - The ability of the software to provide a detailed inventory system including the tracking of ingredients and full liquor inventory.

Menus - The ability to set up and alter menus with ease and the ability to have multiple menus in affect at one time, or on designated days and times. Also, can menu prices be easily changed?

Modifier Groups - The ability to set up and alter modifier groups with ease including items, prices and how many modifiers are allowed for no charge.

Online Ordering - The ability of the software to have a fully integrated system to allow customers to order online and for this order to be transferred automatically into the POS as if the order were placed on site.

Scheduling - The ability of the software to maintain a comprehensive schedule for all employee shifts by department and job. The capability of the software to limit employee log in, log out and time clock functions based on this schedule. The ability to track and enforce meal breaks and allow for both paid and unpaid meal breaks.

Table Reservations - The ability of the software to take and maintain table reservations.

Table Service - The ability to provide a table service interface and the ability to customize this interface and place and track all orders by table and seat. Other functions include: split checks by seat, delay orders by seat or item, and the associated reports.

Digital Security

Data Deletion and Recovery

Every day people input and store all types of information into home and business computers including information on credit cards, medical records, private photos, customers, proprietary information and a wide variety of other personal and business information. At the same time, every day people delete information thinking that is gone and can no longer be accessed by others. Most people have the misconception that one or more of the following activities will ensure information is no longer accessible:



- Deleting info to the recycle bin
- Deleting info out of recycle bin
- Deleting emails
- Deleting text messages (different subject relating to cell phone but has same problem)
- Partitioning disks
- Reformatting disks
- Breaking a computer up and throwing it away
- Throwing a hard drive in a river or mud field

However, none of these activities deletes all information or guarantees that information will not be accessible by others. In many of the cases listed above all the information in question will still be accessible, while in other cases only part of the data will be accessible. Information is retained on the hard drive of a computer (or on a cell phone) until the data is actually overridden. When you delete an item, only the pointer to that item is actually deleted. Since the pointer is deleted a typical user can no longer see the information but the information itself is still on the hard drive and perfectly recoverable. While this is a simplified view and there are exceptions, the reality is that the vast majority of the time you delete information from your computer the information is still on the hard drive and recoverable.

Some cases where this is of particular importance include:

- When you throw a computer away
- When you donate a computer
- When you sell a computer
- When a computer is stolen
- When a computer is pawned



In all of these cases you may be giving the recipient way more information than you ever dreamed of. Data deletion and recovery is a specialized field but it is important that you, your staff and your friends are aware of the implications of not properly deleting data. If you are selling, donating or throwing away a computer ensure that it is properly disposed of and that all data drives are properly cleared. On the other hand if you think you have lost information on a computer there is a very good chance that it is recoverable.



Service. Quality.



Innovation.

Brownstone Technology Solutions provides a variety of products and services related to point of sale systems, video surveillance systems, network services, hosted services, business computers, servers, remote video monitoring and related training. BTS products and services are designed for the hospitality and manufacturing industries.

BTS provides customized computers and servers to meet all of your technology needs.

BTS specializes in integrated systems for the restaurant & bar, hotel & motel, retail and manufacturing industries.



Phone: (310) 297-3605
Fax: (310) 297-3615
brownstonets.com



2613 Manhattan Beach Blvd.
Suite 100
Redondo Beach, CA 90278